

Los Angeles County Commission on Women

President's Report

February 2014

The month of January was extremely busy. I attended the following meetings: Promising Practices in Mental Health and Aging (held at the California Endowment), the 2nd annual Women's Policy Summit (held in Sacramento) and the Association of California Commissions on Women held at Mt. Saint Mary's College in Los Angeles. I presented a short paper and developed a Powerpoint presentation on how commissions can effectively use data, and received lots of information from the other commissions.

Most of the nearby counties were well represented, with delegates coming from as far away as Santa Barbara and San Diego. Santa Monica had five delegates participating, while others – for example, Glendale, Pasadena and Ventura two or more. Olivia was able to attend the welcome reception and dinner on Friday evening and I attended all day Saturday as well as represented the Commission at the business meeting, since our representative was unable to attend. It was very exciting to have “junior commissioners” with us (under age 21), and to interact the excitement of the next generation of leaders on women's issues.

The *Promising Practices* event was well attended, and of the wide variety of sessions and presenters, I found the one describing and providing examples of *assertive case management* with chronic homeless in Los Angeles County among the most interesting. Many community outreach workers have used similar strategies as part of gang prevention/intervention programs. Parks and recreation workers used a similar approach as part of “street club” recreation activists in the 1960s, to reach youth who would not participate in traditional after school programs. This direct contact has increased utilization of a wide variety of services among the homeless, primarily due to direct follow-up with clients who have appointments, or need “reminders” (Don't we all?).

The *Women's Policy Summit* “replaced” Maria Shriver's Women's Conference during the time she was the first lady of our state. The conference emphasizes change resulting from data-based evidence, networking across organizational lines and recognizing inter-connections across the many issues confronting the women of our California. Naturally, a goal is to network with other women, identify legislative possibilities or existing bills that support the espoused agendas of the various Commissions on Women, as well as other programs that address the needs of women and girls; with emphasis on identifying resources, research and best practices to help shape current and future directions.

The AACW meeting was exciting since I had met several of the attendees at the national meeting held in San Jose in late July. It was nice to re-connect, and several women shared brochures, palm cards and other promotional materials; all encouraging our Commission to complete our purchase of items and congratulating us on progress with our website.

Some of the information from these meetings is referenced at the end of this report, and will be incorporated into our annual report (relevant to Los Angeles County). One or more of the

presenters will be guests at future meetings, and we are challenged to use this information to craft specific agendas for our areas. One interesting “statistic” that was shared was that food pantries and feeding programs reach only 3% of the homeless. So who are we missing, and why? Again, our Commission can work on projects when we understand the scope, who we can partner with, and then report the impact we have made in our supervisorial district, or throughout the County.

I continue my work with the Recreation Therapy Task Force to Explore Licensure, since many recreation therapists are female, or work with those marginalized or forgotten in our society; older adults, individuals with disabling conditions, including veterans and the incarcerated. The *Healthy Families, Healthy Planet* initiative examines the interrelationship among poverty, reproductive justice and health care (access to, and quality of), and I incorporate this information in a variety of trainings I conduct, and serve as an Ambassador for this project.

On the educational front, I participated in the CSU Northridge annual faculty retreat (January 13 & 14) and joined a field trip to the Museum of Natural History where our group tour focused on the history of Los Angeles. This was very exciting for new faculty, especially those not from Los Angeles originally-or those who had never visited the museum. In addition, former CSU Northridge President, Blenda Wilson had a community courtyard dedicated last week to honor her years as chief administrator during what the campus refers to as “the earthquake years”. Dr. Wilson inspired and mentored many female professors during her tenure at Northridge, and continues to serve as a role model for future academicians –particularly women in higher education administration.

Naturally, it is hope that these commitments result in additional contacts and cooperative ventures for our commission with other commissioners. We cannot and do not need to try to do things alone, and now we have tons of sources of data to help drive our priorities.

Resources

AAUW Quick Facts. (June 2013). Title IX

Hawkins, T. (2012). *Now or too late: How to Take Charge of Your Life*. Bloomington, IN: iUniverse Books.

McAfee, A & Brynjolfsson, E. (October 2012). Big data: The management Revolution. *Harvard Business Review*, pp.59-68.

Memory and Action: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Magazine.
somewereneighbors.ushmm.org.

The Report on the Status of Women and Girls in California 2013. Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles.